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Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 /008 R

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R 080917Z AUG 73
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO USCINCEUR

S E C R E T STATE 156151

EXDIS

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SECSTATE WASHDC INFO ABU DHABI, AMMAN, NICOSIA, SANAA, DHAHRAN, KUWAIT, LONDON AUGUST 7, 1973 FROM JIDDA IS REPEATED TO YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T JIDDA 3361

EXDIS

DEPT PASS USCINCEUR AND SECDEF FOR ISA

NICOSIA FOR AMB. CRAWFORD

DHAHRAN FOR CHUSMTM

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGE: MASS, US, YE, SA
SUBJ: ARMS AID FOR YEMEN

REF: STATE 138643; JIDDA 3081; SANAA 1453

SUMMARY: AMBASSADOR DESCRIBED TO PRINCE SULTAN CONTINUING URGENT YAR NEED FOR SMALL ARMS AND WEAPONS. YEMENIS ELIGIBLE PURCHASE US MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND HAD EARLIER RECEIVED UAE GOVT OFFER PROVIDE SOME FUNDS. PUTTING THESE TWO OPPORTUNITIES
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TOGETHER YAR HAS COME UP WITH LIST OF ITEMS THEY DESIRE

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PURCHASE FROM USG AND ARE SEEKING ARRANGE AIRLIFT MUCH OF
THIS. US CONVINCED THIS SOUND PROJECT AND URGED SAG PROVIDE
LAST LEG OF AIRLIFT FROM SOME DELIVERY POINT IN SAUDI
ARABIA TO YAR. SULTAN HAD NO OBJECTION TO YAR PURCHASE
BUT RAISED NUMBER OF QUESTIONS AND PARTICULARLY WISHED
KNOW HOW MANY C-130 PLANELOADS WOULD BE INVOLVED. AMB SAID HE
WOULD ENDEAVOR DISCOVER, BUT REMINDED SULTAN US HAS NO RPT NO
FUNDS SUPPLY ARMS FOR YAR. ACTION REQUESTED: INFORMATION AS TO
NUMBER OF C-130 LOADS THAT MIGHT BE REQUIRED FOR RSAF TO CARRY
ARMS TO YEMEN. END SUMMARY.

1. TOLD PRINCE SULTAN AT RECENT MEETING WITH HIM THAT YAR CON-
TINUING FACE DIFFICULT AND THREATENING MILITARY SITUATION VIS-
A-VIS PDRY. THERE WERE STILL CONSIDERABLE GUERRILLA ENCROACH-
MENTS IN VULNERABLE SOUTHERN AREAS OF COUNTRY. HIGH RATE
OF INSURGENCY HAD LED TO RAPID UTILIZATION ARMS AND AMMUNITION.
ACCORDINGLY, WHILE YARG MOST GRATEFUL FOR RECENT SUBSTANTIAL
SAUDI CONTRIBUTION, EMERGENCY NEED PERSISTS AND YARG HAS BEEN
LOOKING AROUND FOR OTHER MEANS SECURING URGENTLY REQUIRED ADD-
ITIONAL SMALL ARMS AND WEAPONS.

2. REMINDED SULTAN I HAD EARLIER INFORMED HIM YAR ELIGIBILITY
PURCHASE MILITARY EQUIPMENT FROM USG. IN ADDITION IT APPEARED
THAT SOME TIME AGO UAE GOVT HAD MADE OFFER PROVIDE FUNDS FOR YAR
MILITARY PURCHASES IF LATTER DESIRED. PUTTING THESE TWO OFFERS
TOGETHER YEMENIS HAD NOW COME UP WITH LIST OF ITEMS THEY WISHED
PURCHASE WHICH FILLS OUT CONSIDERABLE PORTION REMAINING OF THEIR
INITIAL EMERGENCY REQUEST. YAR REPRESENTATIVES WOULD SOON BE
INFORMING HRH OF THEIR PLAN BUT I WISHED HIM KNOW IN ADVANCE YAR
HAD OUR WHOLEHEARTED SUPPORT IN THIS ENDEAVOR.

3. YEMENIS HAVE EXPRESSED STRONG DESIRE FOR AIRLIFT OF ADDITIONAL
ITEMS THEY NEED. WE WERE PROPOSING THIS SHOULD BE TO SOME AIRPORT-
EXCHANGE POINTED IN SAUDI ARABIA WHENCE, I URGED SULTAN, RSAF
WOULD BE IN BEST POSITION CONTINUE AIRLIFT TO POINT OF DESTIN-
ATION IN YAR. CONCLUDED BY STRESSING AGAIN USG HAD CREFULLY
EXAMINED SOUNDNESS THIS WHOLE PROJECT AND CONVINCED IT FULLY
JUSTIFIED. WE HOPED VERY MUCH SAUDI ARABIA WOULD AGREE TO
COMPLETE FINAL SHORT LEG FOR AIR DELIVERY OF EQUIPMENT TO YAR.

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4. SULTAN EXPRESSED AT ONCE APPROVAL IN PRINCIPLE, SAYING HE
HAD NO OBJECTION AT ALL USG, YAR AND UAE COMBINING TO HELP
WITH YEMENI REARMING. HE HAD SOME COMMENTS AND QUESTIONS HOW-
EVER. FIRST, WHY COULD NOT AMMUNITION BE DELIVERED TO YEMEN IN
SAME WAY SAUDI SUPPLIES HAD BEEN SENT, VIZ. BY BOAT FROM JIDDA
TO HODEIDA? THIS MODE OF TRANSPORT HAD PROVED SATISFACTORY IN
CASE OF INITIAL SAUDI SHIPMENT, WITH GOODS ARRIVING IN 24 HOURS.

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5. I REPLIED THAT TRANSSHIPMENT OF AMMUNITION AND WEAPONS WOULD BE MUCH SAFER AND FASTER IF PERFORMED FROM ONE AIRPLANE TO ANOTHER RATHER THAN HAVING TO BE CARRIED THROUGH STREETS CITY OF JIDDA TO JIDDA PORT. MOREOVER, AS PART OF GENERAL COLLABORATIVE EFFORT BY SAUDI ARABIA AND ITS NEIGHBORS TO ASSIST YAR WITH ITS DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS, IT SEEMED ONLY REASONABLE SAUDIS SHOULD CONTRIBUTE LAST SHORT LEG OF PLAN FOR EXPEDITIOUS DELIVERY. SAUDI ARABIA SHOULD BE WILLING MAKE THIS CONTRIBUTION. FOR REASONS WE HAD OFTEN DISCUSSED, IT WOULD NOT RPT NOT BE WISE FOR USAF PLANES TO FLY DIRECTLY INTO SANAA.

6. SULTAN THEN ASKED HOW MANY C-130 LOADS WOULD BE INVOLVED AND I PROMISED TRY TO GET THIS INFORMATION FOR HIM. HE INQUIRED AS TO WHO WOULD BE FOOTING BILL FOR COST OF AIR TRANSPORT FROM US TO SAUDI ARABIA. RESPONDED I ASSUMED THIS BEING WORKED OUT BY YARG AND UAEG. AS I HAD PREVIOUSLY EXPLAINED, US HAS NO RPT NO FUNDS AVAILABLE TO BE EXPENDED ON REARMING YAR.

7. SULTAN STATED HE WOULD TAKE WHOLE PROBLEM UNDER ADVISEMENT AND WOULD INFORM US AND YAR AS SOON AS HE HAD CLEARED IDEA PROPORTIONS OF MILITARY AIRLIFT WHICH RSAF WOULD BE ASKED TO ASSUME. IN RESPONSE MY QUESTION, HE INDICATED USAF PLANES SHOULD PROBABLY PLAN COME TO TAIF TO UNLOAD.

8. COMMENT: BOTH WE AND YEMENIS WILL OBVIOUSLY HAVE TO KEEP AFTER SULTAN PERSUADE HIM COME THROUGH WITH OFFER OF SHORT-LEG AIRLIFT SERVICE.(SAUDI C-130'S ARE IN FACT HEAVILY ENGAGED AND, LOCKHEED TELLS US, OVERWORKED.)
NEVERTHELESS, THERE SEEMS NO SIGNIFICANT REASON SAG SHOULD NOT MAKE THIS MINIMAL CONTRIBUTION TO FURTHER EMERGENCY REARMING OF YAR.

9. ACTION REQUESTED: STATEMENT ON NUMBER OF C-130 LOADS
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WHICH WILL BE REQUIRED GET AMMO AND OTHER ARMS TO YEMEN FROM TAIF.
THACHER UNQUOTE ROGERS

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